



2 INCOME/CATEGORICAL ELIGIBILITY

Effective: 12/1/95

2.10 Timeframes for Program Benefits

Revised: 05/16/05

POLICY: The length of the certification period and number of food packages which may be received in the certification period is dependent upon the status of the participant. Ideally, the participant is scheduled for the re-certification appointment as close to the pick-up day as possible.

PROCEDURE:

A. TIMEFRAMES FOR BENEFITS

Timeframes for benefits are used determine the length of certification and the number of food packages that may be received in the certification period. The drafts must be appropriate for age and first date to use.

Timeframes for Benefits

Pregnant women are certified once; for the duration of their pregnancy up to six weeks after the actual delivery date. The number of packages issued will vary.

Postpartum non-breastfeeding women are categorically eligible for benefits until six months from the actual delivery date. If the pick-up day falls before the certification expiration date and the woman has already received six packages in the certification period, she may not receive another package. Postpartum women should be recertified by six weeks after delivery.

Breastfeeding women are categorically eligible until their infant is 12 months of age or until they stop breastfeeding, whichever comes first. A breastfeeding woman should be recertified by six weeks postpartum. It is recommended to schedule both the mother and baby to be certified at the same time preferably within 1 week postpartum. A status E - breastfeeding woman should not receive more than 12 food packages.

Infants are certified to one year of age. Infants are eligible to receive program benefits until one year from the date of birth. An infant may receive up to thirteen (13) food packages before the certification period expires.

Children are categorically eligible until their fifth birthday and must be certified at intervals of approximately six months. A certification period extends six months from the certification date. No more than the equivalent of six full food packages per certification may be issued.

Transfers are served until their certification period expires.



B. REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHEDULING RECERTIFICATION APPOINTMENTS

Recertification appointments may be scheduled to occur 30 days before or after the certification period ends for infants and children. Breastfeeding and postpartum women have a 6 week period within which they must become recertified from the pregnancy status. This means that the appointment date may occur 30 days before or after the expiration date of the certification period. A person may not be issued food benefits after the certification period has expired.

1. Exceptions:

- a) **Early Certification:** The certification period may be less than 6 months, perhaps a 4 or 5 months. For example, it may be advantageous to get individuals in a family on the same certification schedule, such as when an infant is born into the family, or to enhance coordination of services such as HealthCheck or immunization schedule. If the participant is found ineligible, they should be notified of the determination and should receive the food benefits to complete the previous certification period. If the participant is over income, give a termination notice and issue one last full or partial food package. (Participants should be aware of this potential consequence with early certification.)
- b) **Late Certification:** Recertification appointments may take place beyond 30 days of the expiration of the certification date. When trying to schedule the appointment near the pick-up day, the appointment schedule may be full. Appointments may be delayed 1 to 2 weeks after certification expiration date. Participants who receive multi-month issuance are given an appointment 2 to 3 months in advance but the appointment is to take place within 1 month of the certification expiration date.
 - (1) Option: If the State WIC Office has approved a waiting list and if recertification appointments cannot be scheduled to take place within 30 days from the expiration of the certification date, participants should be placed on the waiting list by probable priority.

- 2. Initial certification appointments may not be scheduled to take place more than one month in the future because scheduling timeframes must be met. If it is not possible to meet these timeframes and the State WIC Office has approved a waiting list, applicants should be placed on the waiting list by probable priority.

C. FOR MORE INFORMATION

See Chapter 4 Food Package/Draft Issuance for further draft issuance information.